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MEXICAN-AMERICANS, A HANDBOOK FOR EDUCATORS.

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APPROXIMATELY FIVE MILLION PERSONS OF MEXICAN ANCESTRY RESIDE IN THE STATES OF CALIFORNIA, ARIZONA, NEW MEXICO, TEXAS, AND COLORADO. A LARGE NUMBER HAVE ALSO MADE HOMES IN THE GREATER CHICAGO AREA AND IN OTHER INDUSTRIAL CENTERS. MEXICAN AMERICANS HAVE PLAYED A VITAL ROLE IN THE INDUSTRIAL, AGRICULTURAL, ARTISTIC, INTELLECTUAL, AND POLITICAL LIFE OF THE SOUTHWEST. FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS MEXICO HAS BEEN A CENTER FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF CULTURAL FACTORS AND THE MEXICAN AMERICAN PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES HAVE SERVED AS A CULTURAL BRIDGE FOR THE DIFFUSION NORTHWARD. THE MEXICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY IS DESCRIBED AS BEING PROUD OF ITS MEXICAN BACKGROUND AND IS EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTY IN ACCULTURATION. MEXICAN AMERICAN YOUTH OFTEN MAKE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SCHOOLS BY BRINGING A VARIED BACKGROUND OF EXPERIENCES AND SKILLS, BILINGUALISM, CULTURAL FACTORS, HOMEMAKING SKILLS, AND PRACTICAL WORK EXPERIENCE. SIXTEEN SUGGESTIONS ARE PRESENTED TO TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS THAT WOULD HELP PROVIDE TRANSFER OF TRAINING FOR ALL STUDENTS INTO A MIXED ANGLO MEXICAN CULTURE. THE PUBLICATION CONCLUDES WITH A LISTING OF SUPPLEMENTARY AUDIOVISUAL AIDS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS WHICH ARE AVAILABLE FOR CLASSROOM USE AT BOTH THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL. (JS)

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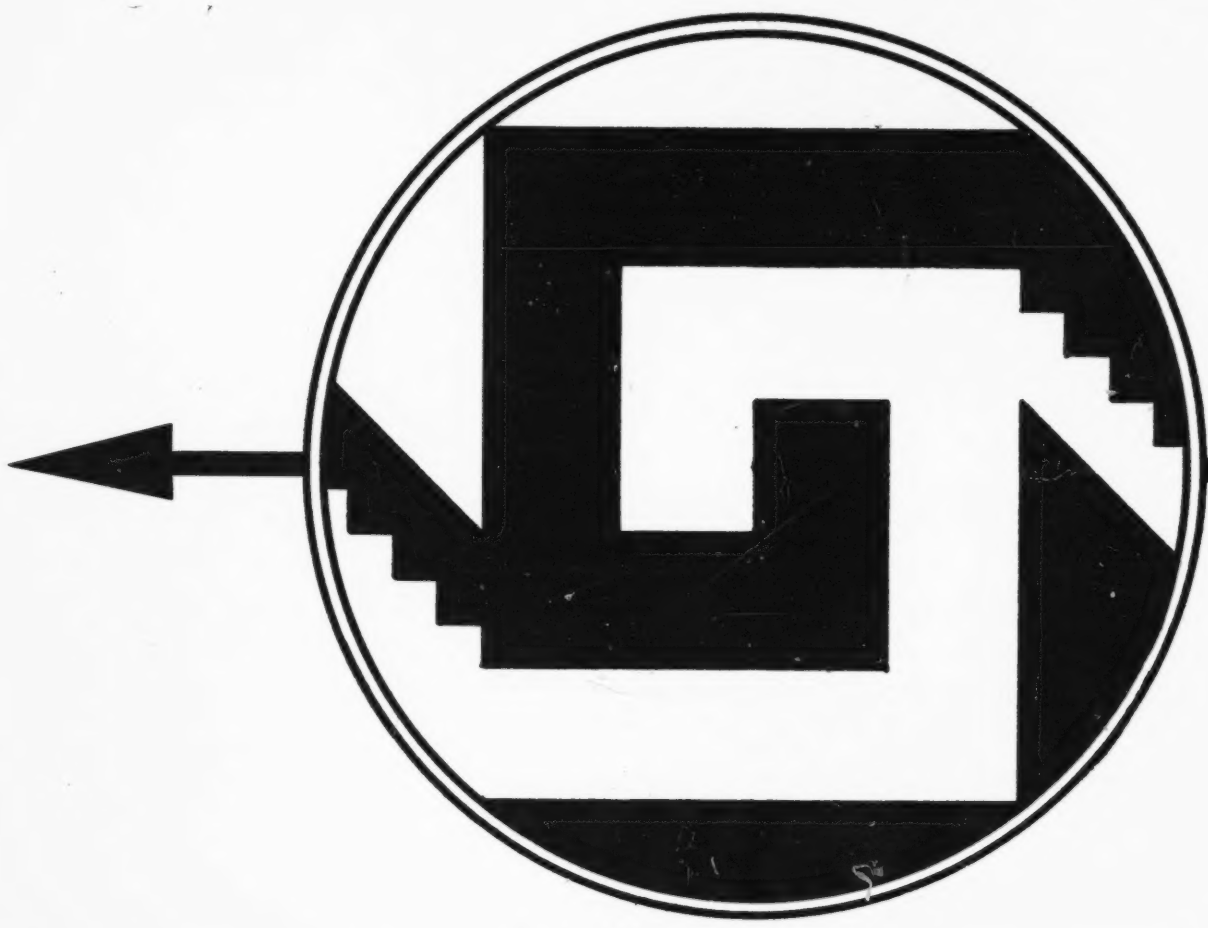

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M E X I C A N - A M E R I C A N S :

A H A N D B O O K F O R E D U C A T O R S

By

Jack D. Forbes

Jack D. Forbes is the author of APACHE, NAVAHO AND SPANIARD (Norman, 1960), THE INDIAN IN AMERICA'S PAST (Englewood Cliffs, 1964), WARRIORS OF THE COLORADO: THE YUMAS OF THE QUECHAN NATION AND THEIR NEIGHBORS (Norman, 1965), and NEVADA INDIANS SPEAK (in press). He is also the author of numerous articles on minority group history and culture and is currently completing a documentary anthology relating to the Mexican-American people. Dr. Forbes has taught at the University of Southern California, Citrus College, San Fernando Valley State College, and the University of Nevada, and has held research fellowships from the Social Science Research Council and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation.

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I. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN PEOPLE

Approximately five million persons of Mexican ancestry reside in the United States. Most live in the states of California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Colorado, but a large number have made homes in the greater Chicago area and in other industrial centers. In many sections of the Southwest, particularly along the border from San Diego, California to Brownsville, Texas Mexican-Americans are the majority population, and their language and culture serve to provide the entire region with much of its charm and distinctiveness.

Modern-day Mexican-Americans play a vital role in the industrial, agricultural, artistic, intellectual, and political life of the Southwest but the significance of this group cannot be measured solely in terms of present-day accomplishments. It is certain that the Southwest as we know it would not exist without the Mexican-Spanish heritage. That which sets New Mexico off from Oklahoma and California off from Oregon is in large measure the result of the activities of the ancestors of our fellow citizens of Mexican descent. Our way of life has been and is being immeasurably enriched by their presence north of the present-day international boundary.

II. THE MEXICAN HERITAGE OF THE UNITED STATES: AN HISTORICAL SUMMARY

What is a Mexican?

Prior to 1821 (when the modern Mexican nation won its independence from Spain), a Mexican was usually a person who spoke the Mexican or Aztec language (Náhuatl). In fact, the early Spaniards almost always referred to the Aztec people as Mexicans. This practice has continued in modern Mexico where the Náhuatl language is called "Mexicano" by the common people and where writers usually speak of the Mexican Empire rather than the Aztec Empire. The modern people of Mexico, who are said by scholars to be about 80% native Indian in their ancestry, are proud of their descent from the ancient Mexicans and trace the history of their people back to the builders of the magnificent cities of Teotihuacan, Monte Albán, and Chichén Itzá.

Our Ancient Mexican Heritage

The Mexican heritage of the United States commences long before the time of Christ. About the year 4000 B.C. Indians living in southern New Mexico learned how to raise corn (maize) as a result of contacts with Mexico (where that remarkable plant was first domesticated after what must have been a long and tedious process). Other crops, including squash and beans, were subsequently borrowed and still later (about 500 A.D.) Southwestern Indians began to develop the Pueblo Indian Civilization. This advanced way of life, which still flourishes in Arizona and New Mexico, was largely based upon Mexican influences in architecture, pottery-making, clothing, religion and government.

In about 1000 A.D., according to some scholars, a people known as the Hohokam moved from northern Mexico into what is now southern Arizona. They brought many advanced traits with them, including the construction of monumental irrigation systems, stone etching techniques, and, very possibly, new political concepts. The Hohokams constructed a large center at Snaketown, Arizona and spread their influence widely, apparently establishing a colony at Flagstaff and trading their pottery as far as the San Fernando Valley in California. During the same general period Mexican influences seem to have reached the Mississippi Valley and advanced cultures developed there. The Indians of the southern United States developed a Mexican-style religious and political orientation and constructed small pyramid-temples while the Ohio River Indians built fanciful effigy mounds, sometimes in the shape of serpents.

The Vitality of Mexican Civilization

It is not at all surprising that ancient Mexico had a great impact upon the area of the United States. The Mexican people were extremely creative, industrious, and numerous (perhaps numbering 20,000,000 in central Mexico alone in the 1520's). Great cities such as Teotihuacán were developed very early and at the time of the Spanish conquest Tenochtitlán (Mexico City) was perhaps the largest and certainly the most modern city in the world. In fact, our cities of today are not as well planned and are probably not as well cared for as was Tenochtitlán.

The ancient Mexicans excelled as artists, craftsmen, architects, city

planners, engineers, astronomers, statesmen, and warriors. They also developed centers of higher education (called calmécac by the Aztecs), wrote excellent poetry, produced many historical and religious works, and were very interested in philosophical questions. One philosopher-king, Nezahualcóyotl, put forth the view that there was only one Creator-God, while Maya scientists developed a calendar which is more accurate than the one we use today.

Mexican traders (pochteca) traveled great distances, going as far south as Panama. They helped to spread Mexican culture and also prepared the way for colonists to settle in places such as El Salvador and Nicaragua and for the last Mexican empire (that of the Aztecs) to expand. By the 1520's the Mexican language was the common tongue of the region from north central Mexico to Central America.

The Spanish Invasion

In the 1520's the Spaniards commenced their conquest of Mexico. Although the Aztecs were conquered quickly, in spite of a noble defense of Tenochtitlán led by Cuauhtémoc (the present-day national hero of Mexico), the rest of what is now Mexico was subdued only very gradually. In fact, many Indian groups in northern Mexico and in the jungles of Yucatan-Guatemala were never conquered. Also, many of the Mexicans who were subdued never lost their identity and this explains why at least one-tenth of the people of modern Mexico speak native languages, often in addition to Mexican Spanish.

The Spanish invasion did not bring an end to the vitality of the Mexican people. Most Spaniards came to rule, not to work, and the magnificent

churches, aqueducts, and palaces of the colonial period are essentially the result of native labor and craftsmanship. Educated Mexicans helped to record the history of ancient Mexico and for a brief period a Mexican university, Santa Cruz del Tlaltelolco, flourished, training many persons of native ancestry. The conquering Spaniards, if of high rank, often married native noblewomen and the common Spaniards married ordinary Indian women, in both cases contributing to the mixture of the Spanish and native Mexican races.

The Hispano-Mexican Northward Movement

The number of Spaniards who came to Mexico was always very slight and the growth and expansion of the Spanish Empire depended upon the use of native and mixed-blood (mestizo) servants, settlers, craftsmen, miners, and soldiers (the Tlaxcaltecos, Mexicans of Tlaxcala, were particularly relied upon as colonists and soldiers). The conquest of the north would have been impossible without Mexicans and every major settlement, from Santa Fe, New Mexico, to Saltillo, Coahuila, had its Mexican district (barrio or colonia). Many of the settlers taken by Diego de Vargas to northern New Mexico in the 1690's were called "Españoles Mexicanos," that is, "Aztec-Spaniards;" and Juan de Oñate, the first Spanish governor of New Mexico, was married to a woman of Aztec royal ancestry and their son, Cristobal de Oñate, was the second governor of that province. Every major expedition, including those of Coronado and De Soto, utilized Mexicans, and eight Mexican soldiers were stationed at San Diego, California in 1769 by Gaspar de Portolá. The northward movement of Spain into the southwestern United States was, therefore, a Spanish-Mexican affair. It was Spanish-led but depended for its success upon Mexicans and mixed-bloods. In California, for example, well over half of the Spanish-speaking settlers

were of Indian or mixed ancestry and the forty-six founders of Los Angeles in 1781 included only two persons called Spaniards, and their wives were Indian.

The Creation of Modern Mexican Culture

Gradually the way of life brought to America by the Europeans became mixed with native Mexican influences, until the life of the common people became a blend of Spanish-Arabic and Indian traits, much as the culture of England after 1066 became a blend of French-Latin and Anglo-Celtic traditions. The Spaniards used the Mexican language for governmental, scholarly, and religious purposes for several generations and many Mexican words, such as coyote, elote, jicara, tamal, chile, chocolate, jacal, ocelote, and hundreds of others, became part of Spanish as spoken in Mexico. Roman Catholic religious practice was modified by many Indian customs and devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe has had a lasting impact upon the Catholic faith.

Meanwhile, the Mexican people intermixed with diverse tribes and eventually began to absorb both the non-Mexican Indian and the Spaniard himself. This process of migration and mixture made possible the creation of the independent Mexican republic in 1821, after a ten-year struggle for freedom.

The Mexican Republic in the North

Independent Mexico was to have a lasting impact upon the southwestern United States. Many Mexican leaders were imbued with new republican and equalitarian ideals and they sought to implement these reforms. Legislatures and elected local councils were established in California and

elsewhere, the Indians and mixed-bloods were granted complete legal equality and full citizenship, and foreigners were encouraged to take up a new life as Mexicans. On the other hand, many persons found it hard to break with the authoritarian legacy of Spain, and republican reforms were often subverted. Foreign settlers did not always choose to become good Mexican citizens, as for example the Anglo-Texans who refused to set their slaves free or to obey Mexican land-title and tariff regulations.

The early Mexican governments were often beset by financial difficulties and progress was difficult in the face of widespread illiteracy and an unequal distribution of wealth and power. Gradually, however, these negative conditions were overcome and the Mexican people advanced along the road of democracy, albeit with backward steps from time to time.

In what is now the United States Mexicans were active in the development of new mining regions (gold was discovered in California in 1842, for example), opening up new routes for travelers (as from Santa Fe to Los Angeles via Las Vegas, Nevada), founding schools (some twenty-two teachers were brought to California in the 1830's and a seminary was established at Santa Ynez), establishing new towns (Sonoma, California is an example), and setting up printing presses (as in California in 1835). The north was a frontier region and was, therefore, not in the forefront of Mexican cultural progress, but it did benefit from developments originating further south.

Mexican Miners and Colonists in the North

Commencing in the 1830's Mexican settlers began moving north once again. Some 200 craftsmen, artisans, and skilled laborers sailed to California in that decade, and soon overland immigrants from Sonora were joining them. Thereafter a steady stream of Sonorans reached California, only to be turned into a flood by the discovery of gold in the Sierra Nevada foothills in 1848. The Sonorans were often experienced miners and their techniques dominated the California Gold Rush until steam-powered machinery took over at a later date. Chihuahuans and other Mexicans also "rushed" to California by sea and by land and they too exercised an impact upon mining as well as upon commerce.

The United States-Mexican War of 1846-1848 did not immediately alter the character of the Southwest greatly, except in eastern Texas and northern California. The Gold Rush changed the language of central California after 1852 (when Mexican miners were largely expelled from the Sierra Nevada mines), but Mexicans continued to dominate the life of the region from San Luis Obispo, California, to San Antonio, Texas. Southern California, for example, remained a Spanish-speaking region until the 1870's with Spanish-language and bi-lingual public schools, Spanish-language newspapers, and Spanish-speaking judges, elected officials, and community leaders. The first Constitution of the State of California, created in part by persons of Mexican background, established California as a bi-lingual state and it remained as such until 1878. Similar conditions prevailed in other southwestern regions.

Anglo-Americans Become Dominant

Gradually, however, Anglo-Americans from the east who were unsympathetic toward Mexican culture came to dominate the Southwest. Having no roots in the native soil and being unwilling to become assimilated to the region, these newcomers gradually transformed the schools into English-language institutions where no Spanish was taught, constructed buildings with an "eastern" character, pushed Mexican leaders into the background, and generally caused the Mexican-American, as he has come to be termed, to become a forgotten citizen.

By the 1890's, on the other hand, tourists and writers began to rediscover the "Spanish" heritage and "landmark" clubs commenced the process of restoring the decaying missions of the Southwest. A "Spanish" cultural revival was thus initiated, and soon it began to influence architectural styles as well as the kind of pageantry which has typified much of the Southwest ever since. Unfortunately, the Mexican-Indian aspect of the region's heritage was at first overlooked and the Mexican-American people benefited but little from the emphasis upon things Spanish.

Twentieth-Century Mexican "Pioneers"

In the early 1900's a new group of Mexican immigrants began to enter the United States, attracted by job offers from agricultural developers who wished to open up virgin lands in southern California, Colorado, Arizona, and south Texas. During World War I and the 1920's this movement became a flood, a flood which largely overwhelmed the older group of Mexican-Americans (except in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado)

and became ancestral to much of the contemporary Spanish-speaking population in the Southwest.

These hundreds of thousands of new Mexican-Americans had to overcome many obstacles as they attempted to improve their life patterns. Anglo-Americans were prejudiced against people who were largely of native American, brown-skinned origin, who were poor, who of necessity lived in substandard or self-constructed homes, who could not speak English, and who were not familiar with the workings of a highly competitive and acquisitive society. Gradually, and in spite of the trauma of the Great Depression (when all sorts of pressures were used to deport Mexican-Americans to Mexico), los de la raza, as Mexicans in the United States frequently refer to themselves, climbed the economic ladder and established stable, secure communities in the Southwest.

The Internal Development of the Mexican-American Community.

The Mexican-American community was not simply a passive force during this long period of transition. Everywhere mutual benefit societies, patriotic Mexicanist organizations, newspapers, social clubs, small stores and restaurants were founded, and artisans began to supply Anglo-American homes with pottery and other art objects (the first gift I ever gave to my mother was a pottery bowl made by a Mexican-American craftsman who fashioned ceramics in a shop behind his home on our street in El Monte, California).

Mexican-American mutual benefit organizations soon commenced the task of helping to upgrade the status of agricultural and industrial workers

by seeking better wages and conditions of employment. During the 1920's and 1930's Mexican-American labor organizers, with little formal education and less money, traveled from region to region, helping in the unionization process. Ever since, labor leaders have played an important role in Mexican-American affairs and Spanish speaking union officers are a significant element in the structure of organized labor in the Southwest. Current efforts directed toward the unionization of agricultural workers and obtaining a minimum wage for agricultural laborers, from California to south Texas, are being led by organizers of Mexican ancestry.

During the past twenty years the cultural and political life of Mexican-Americans has advanced remarkably. Today, fine Spanish-language newspapers blanket the Southwest and Far West, some of which are daily periodicals with the latest dispatches from Europe and Mexico. Magazines, including bi-lingual ones, issue forth with slick paper and exciting photographs. Spanish-language radio and television stations reach much of the Southwest, and theatrical-musical productions of a folk or modern nature are frequently staged for the benefit of both los de la raza and Anglos.

Mexican-American civic, business and political leaders are now prominent in many regions, and they include within their ranks members of Congress, mayors, and all types of professional people. The image of the Mexican heritage has vastly improved due not only to the activities of individual Mexican-Americans, but also due to the cultural renaissance occurring in Mexico itself concurrent with the incredible richness of

the Mexican past revealed by contemporary archaeological discoveries. Anglo-Americans have ceased emphasizing the Spanish legacy at the expense of the Mexican, and a more healthy climate of mutual understanding has evolved.

Educational Progress

Educationally, Mexican-American progress has been striking in individual cases but has been slow over-all. Generally speaking, whenever Anglo-Americans gained control over a particular state or region in the Southwest they chose to import the kinds of public schools developed in the Middle West or East. Hispano-Mexican and bi-lingual schools were replaced by English-language, Anglo-oriented schools from which Mexican-American children were sometimes excluded. After the turn of the century greater numbers of Spanish-speaking youth began to attend schools, but the latter were either irrelevant to the background, language, and interests of the pupils (as in New Mexico) or were segregated, marginal elementary schools (as in much of California and Texas). Normally, secondary-level education was not available to Mexican-American pupils except in an alien Anglo-dominated school (and even that opportunity was often not present in many rural counties in Texas and elsewhere).

During the post-World War II period segregated schools for Mexican-Americans largely disappeared, except where residential segregation operated to preserve the ethnic school. Greater numbers of Mexican-Americans entered high school and enrollment in college also increased, although slowly. Nevertheless, drop-out rates remain high, even today;

and it is also true that the typical school serving Mexican-Americans makes little, if any, concession to the Mexican heritage, the Spanish language, or to the desires of the Mexican-American community.

A Six Thousand Year Old Heritage

In summary, the Mexican heritage of the United States is very great indeed. For at least 6,000 years Mexico has been a center for the dissemination of cultural influences in all directions, and this process continues today. Although the modern United States has outstripped Mexico in technological innovation, the Mexican people's marked ability in the visual arts, music, architecture, and political affairs makes them a constant contributor to the heritage of all of North America. The Mexican-American people of the United States serve as a bridge for the diffusion northward of valuable Mexican traits, serve as a reservoir for the preservation of the ancient Hispano-Mexican heritage of the Southwest, and participate directly in the daily life of the modern culture of the United States.

III. THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE

The United States' five million citizens of Mexican origin do not form a homogeneous group with identical values, customs, and aspirations. One can divide the Mexican-American community along class (economic) lines, from the affluent rancher, businessman, or public official to the migrant farm worker or isolated self-sufficient farmer in the mountains of New Mexico. One can also divide the Mexican-American community on the basis of the degree to which the individual has become Anglicized and integrated into the larger society. One can further classify Mexican-Americans according to the degree of Caucasian ancestry which they possess, or according to whether or not they object to being called "Mexicans" and prefer to be called "Spanish-American." But whichever type of classification system one uses, it is clear that there is no single way of life possessed by our Mexican-American people.

Nonetheless, it is possible for purposes of generalization to ignore those individuals who are non-typical and to concentrate upon the large majority of Mexican-Americans who have many things in common.

First, the Mexican-American community is basically proud of being of Mexican background and sees much of value in the Mexican heritage. By means of folk-level educational agencies, such as benevolent societies, patriotic organizations, and the extended family, many Mexican traits are kept alive, either as functioning parts of the individual's personal life or at least as items with which he feels some degree of familiarity. Mexican arts and crafts, music, dances,

cooking, family structure, concepts of the community, the Spanish language, and other characteristics, are maintained in this manner. Spanish-language radio and television stations, newspapers, and magazines, and Mexican-American political organizations, help to carry on this process as well as to bring in new cultural influences from Mexico. In short, the Mexican-American community possesses many internal agencies which serve to maintain a sense of belonging to "la raza" and which also serve to carry forward worthy aspects of the Mexican heritage.

In many rural areas of the Southwest, as well as in some wholly Mexican urban districts, most adults can be described as belonging primarily to the culture of northern Mexico. The Spanish language is universally favored over English and the bilateral extended family provides a satisfying and strong social background for the individual. In other urban districts, as well as in suburban regions and on the fringes of Mexican neighborhoods in rural areas, one finds numerous Mexican-Americans who are completely bi-lingual, or who in some cases favor English over Spanish. These people have not become "Anglos", but their Mexican cultural heritage has become blended with Anglo-American traits.

Unfortunately, many younger Mexican-Americans, educated in Anglo-oriented schools, have not been able to relate in a positive manner toward either the north Mexican or Mexican-Anglo mixed cultures, primarily because their parents have been unable to effectively transmit the Spanish language and Mexican heritage to them. At the same

time the public schools have either attacked or completely ignored that heritage and have attempted to substitute an often watered-down Anglo heritage. The youth subjected to this pressure have not ordinarily become Anglos, though, because of a feeling of being rejected by the dominant society (because of frequently experienced prejudice and discrimination) and by the schools (because the curriculum is so totally negative as regards their own personal and cultural background). These young people have frequently developed a mixed Anglo-Mexican subculture of their own, based upon a dialect of Spanish heavily modified by an ingenious incorporation of English words and new expressions and upon a "gang" style of social organization.

Another important factor which retards the complete absorption of partially Anglicized Mexican-Americans into the larger society is the fact that more than 95% of Mexicans are part-Indian, 40% are full-blood Indians, and most of the mixed-bloods have more Indian than non-Indian ancestry. Mexican-Americans are, therefore, a racial as well as a cultural minority and the racial differences which set them apart from Anglos cannot be made to "disappear" by any "Americanization" process carried on in the schools.

The larger Mexican-American community is in a process of rapid cultural transition, wherein most individuals are acquiring a mixed Anglo-Mexican culture, while smaller numbers are marrying into or otherwise being absorbed into the dominant Anglo society. An unfortunate aspect of this process is that extremely valuable Mexican traits, such as the strong extended family, the tendency toward mutual aid, the Spanish language, artistic and musical traditions, folk dances, fine cooking,

and such personality characteristics as placing more emphasis upon warm interpersonal relationships than upon wealth acquisition tend to be replaced by what many critics might suggest are the lowest common denominator of materialistic, acquisitive, conformist traits typical of some elements within the Anglo-American population. That this is occurring is largely a result of the fact that many Mexican-American graduates of the public schools feel ambivalent about their own self-identify and about cultural values. They have been deprived of a chance to learn about the best of the Mexican heritage and, at the same time, have been, in effect, told to become Anglicized. They tend, therefore, to drift into the dominant society without being able to make sound value judgements based upon cross-cultural sophistication.

On the other hand, the Mexican-American community considered in its entirety is a vital, functioning societal unit with considerable ability to determine its own future course of development. It may well succeed in developing a reasonably stable bicultural and bilingual tradition which will provide a healthy atmosphere for future generations and which may prove attractive to many Anglos. In any case it is clear that the proximity of Mexico will insure a continual flow of Mexican cultural influences across the border and the Mexican-American community, as a bicultural population, will not soon disappear.

IV. ASSETS WHICH THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN BRINGS TO THE SCHOOL

For far too long many teachers have looked upon culturally different children as being "culturally deprived." Such pedagogues have conceived of their duty as being one of filling this "cultural vacuum" with Anglo-American traits. Unfortunately, this negative (and narrow) attitude has led to the ignoring of the rich legacy which many non-Anglo pupils either bring to school or acquire outside of school through the educational processes of the folk community.

Mexican-American youth often bring to the school a varied background of experiences and skills which can be utilized as mediums for both the development of the Mexican-American pupil's potential and for the enrichment of the school experiences of non-Mexican scholastics.

The ability to speak more than one language has, in most societies, been regarded as an essential characteristic of the fully educated man. The European educated classes have for centuries spoken French, English, German, and sometimes other languages in addition to their native idiom. American Indian groups commonly grew up speaking three or more divergent idioms, in addition to possessing some familiarity with other languages. People in the United States are today coming once again to the realization that, as in the days of Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin, a knowledge of several languages is indeed essential.

The Mexican-American child usually has a headstart over the Anglo-American because of his familiarity with two languages (and a few Mexican-Americans

speak or understand an Indian language as well). It is true that often the knowledge of both Spanish and English is imperfect, but nonetheless the most precious of linguistic skills, the ability to switch back and forth from one language to another and the "feel" for being comfortable in two or more languages, is present as either a fully or partially developed resource. It is also true that most Mexican-Americans speak a dialect of American Spanish while teachers are often acquainted with European Spanish or a standardized international Spanish. American Spanish is, nonetheless, as "correct" and legitimate as any modern idiom and has the asset of being far more "American" than standard American English, incorporating as it does thousands of words of native American origin. What is fundamental is that Mexican-American pupils possess an entrée into two viable languages, both of which (American Spanish and American English) can be utilized as vehicles for sound linguistic development.

Those educators who recognize the value of linguistic training can certainly enrich the total program of their classroom or school by making full use of the Mexican-American child's language advantage. A truly bi-lingual learning experience can be produced which will not only allow the Mexican child to develop both of his languages but which will make it easier for monolingual English-speaking children to master a second tongue.

Mexican-American children also bring to the school a variety of bi-cultural experiences which can enrich almost every facet of the school's program. Their knowledge of folk arts, cooking, music, literature, and dances can be utilized as vehicles for cross-cultural education

and for acquainting children who are new to the region with the rich heritage of the Southwest. Additionally, Mexican-Americans, in sharing their skills with fellow pupils (being teachers, as it were), can help develop in themselves that degree of pride and self-confidence which is so necessary for successful learning generally.

Those Mexican-American pupils who come from folk-level or low-income homes will also possess valuable experiences denied to many affluent children, such as a direct knowledge of domestic arts (taking care of baby brother, et cetera) and practical work (harvesting crops, repairing tractors, et cetera). Such children often have had to assume <u>important</u> responsibilities at an early age and their relatively more mature outlook should prove of immense value to affluent children who have never had contact with life at its more fundamental level.

Needless to state, the adult Mexican-American community possesses valuable resources for school enrichment. It is not uncommon for a <u>colonia</u> (neighborhood) to possess some persons skilled in arts and crafts, folk music, folk dancing, piñata-making, costume-making, Mexican cooking, or in various commercial activities associated with Mexican arts or food. These persons can often be brought into the school as resource people and part-time instructors, thus expanding in a vast way the "bank of skills" possessed by any school district. Additionally, of course, close contacts between the school and the community can be developed or enhanced by this procedure.

In a similar manner professional-level persons of Mexican origin can be called upon to discuss Mexican history, literature, et cetera, and can suggest books, magazines, films, phonograph records, and newspapers which can be used in the school.

In summary, the quality and richness of any school's program can be greatly enhanced if the school possesses Mexican-American students and if the educators in charge are concerned enough to guarantee that all of their pupils are exposed to a multi-cultural experience which truly reflects the meaning and diversity of the Southwestern legacy.

V. SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

A. In so far as is feasible a school serving substantial numbers of Mexican-American pupils should serve as a bridge between these students and the adult world which they will subsequently enter. This adult world will sometimes be Anglo in character, but more often it will be of mixed Anglo-Mexican culture. In any case, the school, if it is to be a bridge, must serve as a transitional experience and not as a sudden leap into a totally foreign set of values and practices.

1. The school environment should have some element of Mexican character, subject, of course, to the desires of the local Mexican-American community. Such character can be created by means of murals depicting aspects of the Mexican-American heritage, Hispano-Mexican architecture, the erection of statues depicting outstanding leaders of Mexican ancestry (such as governors of California), displays of Mexican arts and crafts, bulletin boards depicting Mexican persons and accomplishments, and by the adoption of a name

for the school which is relevant to our Hispano-Mexican past. The expense involved in the above will not necessarily be great, as adults in the local Mexican-American community might well become involved in projects which would have the effect of making the school "their" school.

2. Teachers and administrators in such a school should be familiar with the Spanish language and should be encouraged to utilize this linguistic asset. At the very least, every such school must possess several professional employees capable of conversing with Spanish-speaking parents, since it is generally accepted that a successful school program demands adequate parent-school interaction and communication.

3. Communications intended for parents, such as announcements, bulletins, and report cards, should be prepared in both English and Spanish. Similarly, Parent-Teacher Association groups should be encouraged to follow a bi-lingual pattern. Where many parents cannot understand Spanish, consideration should be given to organizing an English-speaking sub-section for those parents who are not bi-lingual; or, more preferably, using the P.T.A. as a vehicle for teaching Spanish and English to all parents.

4. Every effort should be made to encourage full development in both Spanish and English. Until truly bi-lingual schools become a reality, this may mean essentially that both Spanish and English are taught in the elementary grades. On the other hand, imaginative administrators and teachers may wish to further encourage a bi-lingual atmosphere by the use of signs and displays throughout the school featuring both languages.

5. In schools composed primarily of Spanish-speaking pupils, and where permitted by law, instruction should probably commence in Spanish, with English being taught as a second, or foreign, language. In a mixed school both languages will need to be taught as if they were new idioms.
6. Supplementary materials utilized in the classroom, as well as library resources, should include Spanish-language and/or Mexican-oriented items (magazines, newspapers, books, phonograph records, films, et cetera), in order to provide bi-lingual and bi-cultural experiences for all pupils.
7. Curricula in the school should possess a Mexican dimension wherever appropriate. In social science courses where the development of the Western United States is being discussed, attention should be given to the Hispano-Mexican pioneers of the Southwest, to Mexican governors and explorers, and to economic and political developments taking place under Mexican auspices. Courses in state history in the Southwest should devote considerable time to the total Mexican heritage, including that of modern-day Mexican-Americans.
8. Courses in literature should include readings in Mexican literature (in translation, if necessary) and works by and about Mexican-Americans.
9. Curricula in music and "music appreciation" should give attention to all classes of Mexican music, including folk-Indian, Hispano-Mexican, and neo-classical forms. In many schools, instruction in mariachi music, Aztec music and dance, or Mexican brass band

might well replace or supplement the standard band and orchestra classes.

10. Art and craft courses should acquaint all pupils with Mexican art forms and should provide instruction in Mexican ceramics, mosaic work, weaving, et cetera, wherever feasible or appropriate.
11. Mexican cooking, folk-dancing, and costume-making should be available as a part of the school's programs in home economics and fine arts wherever sufficient interest exists.
12. Mexican-American adults and youth should be involved in the life of the school as resource people, supplementary teachers, teacher's aides, and special occasion speakers. One of the primary objectives of educators should be the linking of the school with the local adult community.
13. Our Mexican cultural heritage, whenever brought into the school, should be treated as an integral and valuable part of our common southwestern legacy, and not as a bit of "exotica" to be used solely for the benefit of Mexican-American pupils.
14. In a school composed of students from diverse cultural backgrounds every effort should be made to bring a little of each culture into the school. A part of this effort might involve incorporating each major ethnic celebration into the school routine (focusing on Chinese-Americans at Chinese New Year, Mexican-Americans during Cinco de Mayo, et cetera).
15. Counselors (and to a lesser degree, the entire staff) should receive special training in Mexican-American culture and history and should have a background in anthropology and/or sociology.

16. School personnel who believe that it is important to examine pupils periodically in order to provide data on "ability" for future counseling or "tracking" should wish to obtain accurate information by the use of tests which are relatively unbiased. It is difficult to ascertain the potential of Spanish-speaking or dialect-speaking youth by means of standard English-language tests, nor can that of low-income students be predicted on the basis of tests oriented toward middle-class paraphernalia or concepts. On the other hand, biased tests will substantially predict the formal achievement level of culturally different pupils attending biased schools. Therefore, a change in tests will accomplish little unless accompanied by changes in the school, which serve to realize and enhance the potential revealed by the new test.

B. The above suggestions are basically designed to change the atmosphere of the school so as to provide greater motivation for all concerned, as well as to impart useful knowledge. In addition, many curricular and methodological innovations are available which are expected to improve learning for <u>all</u> students and these new programs should certainly be made available to Mexican-American youngsters. It is to be suspected, however, that a school which is basically indifferent or hostile toward the Mexican heritage will not succeed in stimulating greater learning merely by the use of methodological innovations unaccompanied by a change in the general orientation of the school.

VI. A GUIDE TO FURTHER READING

(See also Examples of Supplementary Materials Available for Classroom Use.)

Barker, George C. Pachuco, An American-Spanish Argot and Its Social Functions in Tucson, Arizona (University of Arizona, Tucson, Social Science Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 18, Jan. 1950). A study of the "pachuco" language.

Bernal, Ignacio, and Jacques Soustelle. Mexico: Pre-Hispanic Paintings (United Nations Economic and Social Council, World Art Series, No. 10, 1958).

Caso, Alfonso. The Aztecs: People of the Sun (Norman, 1958).

Clark, Margaret. Health in the Mexican-American Culture: A Community Study (Berkeley, 1959). A Study of San Jose, California.

Clincy, Everett Ross. Equality of Opportunity: Latin Americans in Texas (Ann Arbor, 1954).

Cline, Howard F. The United States and Mexico (Cambridge, 1953).

Council of Mexican-American Affairs, First Annual Report on Mexican-American Education Conference Proceedings (Los Angeles, 1956).

Covarrubias, Miguel. Indian Art of Mexico and Central America (New York, 1957).

Dworkin, Anthony Gary. "Stereotypes and Self-Images Held by Native born and Foreign-born Mexican-Americans", Sociology and Social Research, Vol. 49, No. 2, Jan. 1965.
Part of a larger study conducted under the direction of Dr. Paul Sheldon of Occidental College, Los Angeles.

Edmonson, Munroe. Los Manitos - A Study of Institutional Values (New Orleans, 1957).
An anthropological study of values carried out in New Mexico.

"The Eye of Mexico," Evergreen Review, No. 7 (New York, 1959).
A collection of translations of works by Mexican authors.

Gamio, Manuel. The Mexican Immigrant - His Life Story (Chicago, 1931).
A still-timely study of the new arrivals to the United States.

Gamio, Manuel. Mexican Immigration to the United States (Chicago, 1930).
The best study of Mexican immigration.

Garibay K., Angel M. Historia de la Literatura Náhuatl (Mexico, 1953-4).

Garibay K., Angel M. Llave del Náhuatl (Mexico, 1940, 1961).

The above are for those who seek a better knowledge of ancient Mexican thought and of the Mexican language.

Gillmore, Frances. Flute of the Smoking Mirror, a Portrait of Nezahualcóyotl, Poet-king of the Aztecs (Albuquerque, 1949).

Griffith, Beatrice. American Me. (Boston, 1948).
A fine study of Mexican-American youth.

_____. "The Pachuco Patois," Common Ground, Summer, 1947.
A part of the above book, but focusing upon the development of the Pachuco idiom.

Gruening, Ernest. Mexico and Its Heritage. (New York, 1928).
A volume still valuable for its coverage of the Mexican revolutionary era.

Kibbe, Pauline R. Latin Americans in Texas. (Albuquerque, 1946).
A somewhat dated book, but still useful in providing background for recent developments.

Kurath, Gertrude Prokosch, Dances of Anahuac: The Choreography and Music of Precortesian Dances (Chicago: Aldine, 1966).

León-Portilla, Miguel. La Filosofía Náhuatl (Mexico, 1956). Translated as Aztec Thought and Culture (Norman, 1963).
A "must" for an understanding of the Mexican heritage.

Manuel, Herschel T. The Education of Mexican and Spanish-Speaking Children in Texas (Austin, 1930).

_____. "The Educational Problem Presented by the Spanish-Speaking Child...," School and Society, Vol. XL, 1934.

Although somewhat dated, these two studies still have implications for today.

Manuel, Herschel T. Spanish-Speaking Children of the Southwest; Their Education and the Public Welfare. (Austin: University of Texas, 1965)

McWilliams, Carey. North from Mexico: The Spanish-Speaking People of the United States (New York, 1949).
Although dated, this work represents the closest that any author has come to making a general survey of Mexican-American history and development.

"Mexican Issue," The Texas Quarterly, Vol. II, Spring, 1959.
A presentation of modern Mexican literature, art, philosophy and culture.

Ortega, Joaquin. The Compulsory Teaching of Spanish in the Grade Schools of New Mexico (Albuquerque, 1941)

Parkes, Henry B. A History of Mexico (Boston, 1950). Out of date but still useful as an introductory work.

Pinkney, Alphonso, "Prejudice Toward Mexican and Negro Americans," Phylon, 1st Quarter, 1963.

Romanell, Patrick. Making of the Mexican Mind (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1952). This work surveys the world of Mexican intellectual development.

Sanchez, George I. Forgotten People: A Study of New Mexicans (Albuquerque, 1940). The sections on education are still especially pertinent.

Saunders, Lyle. Cultural Differences and Medical Care: The Case of the Spanish-speaking Population of the Southwest (New York, 1954).

_____. A Guide to Materials Bearing on Cultural Relations in New Mexico (Albuquerque, 1944)

_____. Spanish-Speaking Americans in the United States: A Selected Bibliography (New York City, 1944).

Samora, Julian, ed., La Raza: Forgotten Americans (Notre Dame, 1966). A collection of essays and articles aimed at achieving an understanding of contemporary Mexican-American affairs.

Southwest Conference, Proceedings, various years, Occidental College, Los Angeles. These Proceedings often contain articles of significance, but they are not listed separately because they are difficult to obtain.

Taylor, Paul S. An American-Mexican Frontier (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1934). An excellent study, providing insight into present-day issues.

_____. "Mexican Labor in the United States," University of California Publications in Economics, Vol. VI, 1927-1930. Excellent background, including information on educational issues.

Toor, Frances. A Treasury of Mexican Folkways (New York, 1947).

Tuck, Ruth. Not With the Fist (New York, 1946). A study of Mexican-Americans in California.

Yanovski, E. Food Plants of the North American Indians (U. S. Department of Agriculture, Miscellaneous Publications, No. 237). Provides information on Mexican agricultural contributions to modern society.

VII. EXAMPLES OF SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS AVAILABLE FOR CLASSROOM USE.

A. Published Materials (for Secondary-level Use):

1. Paperbound books:

Astrov, Margot, ed. American Indian Prose and Poetry (Capricorn, 1962). Includes Mexican material.

Galarza, Ernesto. Merchants of Labor: the Mexican Bracero Story (McNally and Loftin, 1964, Santa Barbara).

Heller, Celia S. Mexican American Youth: Forgotten Youth at the Crossroads (Random House, 1966). A useful introduction to some problems of Mexican-American youth.

Idell, Albert, trans. The Bernal Diaz Chronicles (Doubleday, 1956). A classic account of the Spanish conquest.

Lewis, Oscar. Tepoztlán: Village in Mexico (Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1960).

Madsen, William. Mexican-Americans of South Texas (Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1964).

Peterson, Frederick. Ancient Mexico (Capricorn; 1962). An excellent survey of ancient Mexican history.

Pozas, Ricardo. Juan the Chamula (University of California, 1962) Explores the life of a group of modern day Mexican Indians.

Ruíz, Ramon, ed. The Mexican War (Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1963). A good introduction to the U. S.-Mexican War.

Séjourné, Laurette. Burning Water: Thought and Religion in Ancient Mexico (Evergreen Grove Press, 1960). An excellent introduction to ancient Mexican philosophy and religion.

Simpson, Lesley B. Many Mexicos (University of California Press, 1952). A useful survey of Mexican civilization.

Soustelle, Jacques. The Daily Life of the Aztecs (Penguin Books, 1964).

Vaillant, George C. Aztecs of Mexico (Penguin Books, 1966). An excellent study of Aztec culture and history.

Von Hagen, Victor W. The Aztec: Man and Tribe (New American Library, 1958). A popular introductory work.

Von Hagen, Victor W. World of the Maya (New American Library, 1960). A popular introductory work.

2. Periodicals: It will be necessary to check with local Mexican-Americans to ascertain which periodicals are currently available. La Opinión, a daily newspaper published in Los Angeles, is an excellent resource. Special periodicals of a valuable nature also appear from time to time but often they are short-lived and any list would soon be out of date.

3. Spanish-language Paperbacks: Numerous, serious Spanish-language studies in all disciplines are available from sources such as the Libreria Universitaria, Ciudad Universitaria, Mexico 20, D. F., and the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico D. F. Write for catalogues.

4. Other Printed Material: Mexican-American groups often publish pamphlets, newsletters, et cetera, which may enrich classroom discussions. It will be necessary to contact the Mexican American Political Association, Community Service Organization, League of United Latin American Citizens, Political Association of Spanish-Speaking Organizations, American G. I. Forum, or other groups in order to ascertain what is currently available. The Mexican Government from time to time issues special publications of value for an understanding of Mexico. The nearest consulate or branch should be contacted for information. Religious groups sometimes have material available, but it is often slanted toward sectarian interests. Government agencies in the United States have issued special publications on Mexican-Americans. Consult the government publications section of the nearest large public library for

information. The Mexican-American Study Project at the University of California, Los Angeles, also issues publications of interest. Interested individuals or groups may be added to their mailing list.

B. Published Materials (for Elementary Use).

There are very few elementary-level books which deal specifically with Mexican-Americans but there are numbers of books which deal with Mexicans living in Mexico or with children from other Spanish-speaking countries. In general, many of these works are unsatisfactory because they are based upon stereotypes and a style of life which disappeared years ago or which has retreated to isolated, rural areas. Teachers and librarians should avoid books which utilize the stereotypes of a rural Mexican family wearing big sombreros and serapes, living in a hut, and using donkeys for transportation. Other categories of books which need to be examined closely are those which feature stories of poverty-stricken Mexican children who achieve success because of Anglo philanthropy, stories of the U. S.-Mexican War written with an Anglo bias, and stories which use the term "Spanish" where Mexican would be more correct.

A few examples of books which are acceptable under the above criteria follow:

Brock, Virginia. Piñatas (Abingdon, 1966)
A how-to-do-it and historical book for upper elementary or junior high.

Geis, Darlene, ed. Let's Travel in Mexico (Children's Press, 1965). An interesting book about Mexico for upper elementary or junior high.

Wilson, Barbara Ker. Fairy Tales of Mexico (Dutton, 1960). A collection of excellent stories for upper elementary grades.

C. Audio-Visual Materials

1. Transparencies

a. Sets available from the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico, D. F. (21 pesos or $1.68 per set).

(1) 50 sets of six transparencies each, focusing primarily upon ancient Mexican civilization but with some sets on more recent monuments and places (Serie 1 through Serie 50).

(2) Two sets of twelve transparencies illustrating the various human racial types of Mexico, from the Museo Nacional de Historia del Castillo de Chapultepec. (Serie 51 and Serie 52). Excellent for courses in social science, anthropology, world history, southwestern history, and biological science.

b. The Archivo y Laboratorio Fotografico of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia also has more than 200,000 photographs and 20,000 other color transparencies available. Write to the above at Córdoba 45, Mexico 7, D. F. for catalogues.

2. Reproductions of Ancient Mexican Ceramic Statues:

a. The Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (above) has a number of reproductions (statues, etc.) available at reasonable prices (ranging from one to sixteen dollars). These would be excellent classroom and display items for schools.

b. Imitation statues, et cetera, are also available in shops throughout the Southwest and along the border. Prices are

relatively high, however, even when dealing at "wholesale."

3. Color Postcards:

   a. Color postcards depicting various aspects of Mexican life and history are available from the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia at about ten cents each. Catalogue available.

   b. Color postcards depicting Hispano-Mexican activities in the Southwest are usually available throughout the region. Postcard manufacturers should be able to supply lists.

4. Phonograph Records:

   a. Records of Mexican folk music are available from the Museo Nacional de Antropología, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia. The cost is about $1.20 per record.

   b. Commercial phonograph records featuring various styles of Mexican and Mexican-American music are available throughout the Southwest. For example, Columbia Records Sales Corporation has available records such as "La Cucaracha" which features twelve songs of the Mexican Revolution and many appropriate records in the Columbia World Library of Folk and Primitive Music. Contemporary Mexican-produced commercial records are usually available in music or appliance stores serving Mexican-American neighborhoods.

   c. Southwestern Mexican folk music is sometimes available on records from museums or historial societies. The Southwest Museum, Los Angeles 42, has a collection of Indian and Hispano-Mexican folk music from the California region.

5. Films

Numerous films are available which have relevance to the Mexican-American heritage. Unfortunately, many of those which deal with Southwestern history are inaccurate and/or biased, usually in a pro-Spanish or pro-Anglo direction. Films dealing with the "Mission Period" are often derogatory in their treatment of native Indians, for example. Films dealing with Mexico must be examined for stereotypes or for a failure to illustrate the diversity of modern Mexico, if they deal with contemporary conditions.

Consult film catalogues for lists of those currently available.

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